Suite 5/44 Hampstead Rd
Maidstone VIC 3012
P: 03 9318 4322 I F: 03 9318 5822
E: info@hampsteadmedical.com.au
W: http://www.hampsteadmedical.com.au

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Our Commitment to Your Privacy

Hampstead Medical is committed to protecting the privacy, confidentiality and security of your personal and health information.

We understand that information shared with healthcare professionals is private and sensitive. We take our responsibility to protect this information seriously and ensure it is handled in accordance with applicable Australian privacy legislation, professional obligations and healthcare standards.

This Privacy Policy explains how we collect, use, disclose, store and protect your personal and health information, including information collected through our website, appointment booking systems and other electronic communication channels.

Our practice manages personal and health information in accordance with:

- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).
- Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).
- Health Privacy Principles (HPPs).
- My Health Records Act 2012 (Cth), where applicable.
- Relevant professional and regulatory requirements, including the RACGP Standards for general practices.

About Our Practice

Hampstead Medical
Suite 5, 44 Hampstead Road, Maidstone VIC 3012
T: 03 9318 4322 F: 03 9318 5822
Email: reception@hampsteadmedical.com.au
Website: https://hampsteadmedical.com.au/

Our Privacy Officer is responsible for overseeing privacy-related enquiries, requests and complaints. You may contact our Privacy Officer through the practice's telephone number, email address or in person at reception.

What Personal Information Do We Collect?

The type of information we collect depends on your interactions with our practice and the healthcare services you receive.

1. Personal and Demographic Information

This may include:

- Full name and preferred name.
- Date of birth and gender.

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- Residential and postal address.
- Telephone number and email address.
- Emergency contact details.
- Next of kin or nominated representative details.
- Occupation and relevant demographic information.

2. Health Information

As a healthcare provider, we collect information necessary to provide appropriate medical care. This may include:

- Medical and surgical history.
- Family medical history.
- Current and previous medications.
- Allergies and adverse reactions.
- Immunisation and vaccination records.
- Physical and mental health information.
- Consultation notes and clinical assessments.
- Pathology and diagnostic imaging results.
- Specialist reports and referral letters.
- Treatment plans and ongoing care arrangements.
- Relevant hospital discharge summaries.
- Information relating to disabilities or other healthcare needs.

3. Healthcare and Government Identifiers

Where required, we may collect:

- Medicare number.
- Individual Healthcare Identifier (IHI).
- Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) details.
- Private health insurance information.

4. Financial and Administrative Information

This may include:

- Billing and payment records.
- Medicare claim information.
- Appointment history.
- Payment transaction details.
- Information required to process invoices and administrative requests.
- Payment information relating to telehealth consultations and pre-authorised payments for certain appointment types.

Payments and pre-authorisations may be processed securely through our online booking provider, HotDoc. While payment transactions and pre-authorisations are processed to facilitate payment for

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our services and secure appointments, Hampstead Medical does not store or retain patients' full credit or debit card details.

Website and Electronic Information

When you visit or interact with our website, we may collect:

- Internet Protocol (IP) address.
- Browser type and operating system.
- Device information.
- Website usage and navigation information.
- Cookies and analytics information.
- Information submitted through online enquiry or contact forms.

How Do We Collect Your Information?

We generally collect personal and health information directly from you when you:

- Register as a patient.
- Complete patient registration or medical history forms.
- Attend consultations or receive treatment.
- Book appointments online, by telephone or in person.
- Contact our practice through email, SMS or our website.
- Submit online enquiries or administrative requests.
- Participate in health assessments, surveys or feedback activities.

In some circumstances, we may collect information from other sources where it is necessary for your healthcare or permitted by law.

These sources may include:

- Your nominated representative, guardian or responsible person.
- Other treating doctors and healthcare professionals.
- Specialists and allied health providers.
- Hospitals and community health services.
- Pathology and diagnostic imaging providers.
- Pharmacies.
- Medicare and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
- My Health Record, where authorised and applicable.

Where practicable and appropriate, we will inform you when information has been collected from another source.

Why Do We Collect Your Information?

We collect personal and health information primarily to provide safe, appropriate and continuous healthcare.

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Your information may be used for the following purposes:

Clinical Care

- Assessing, diagnosing and treating medical conditions.
- Providing preventive healthcare and health assessments.
- Coordinating your care with other healthcare providers.
- Managing referrals, investigations and follow-up appointments.
- Maintaining accurate and complete medical records.
- Managing recalls and reminders for clinically necessary follow-up.

Practice Administration

- Managing appointments and patient registrations.
- Processing payments and Medicare claims.
- Communicating appointment changes and reminders.
- Managing patient enquiries and feedback.
- Maintaining administrative and financial records.

Quality Improvement and Accreditation

- Conducting clinical audits and quality improvement activities.
- Supporting practice accreditation requirements.
- Reviewing clinical and administrative processes.
- Meeting professional, legal and regulatory obligations.

Where possible, information used for quality improvement, education or reporting purposes will be de-identified.

How Do We Use and Disclose Your Information?

Your personal and health information will only be used or disclosed for the purpose for which it was collected, a directly related purpose you would reasonably expect, or another purpose permitted or required by law.

1. Disclosure to Other Healthcare Providers

Where necessary for your healthcare, we may share relevant information with:

- Other doctors within our practice.
- Specialists and other referring practitioners.
- Hospitals and emergency departments.
- Allied health professionals.
- Pathology and diagnostic imaging providers.
- Pharmacists and other healthcare professionals involved in your care.

We aim to disclose only the information reasonably necessary for the relevant healthcare purpose.

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2. Disclosure for Administrative and Business Purposes

We may disclose relevant information to authorised third-party service providers who assist in operating our practice, including:

- Practice management and medical software providers.
- Appointment booking platforms.
- Secure messaging providers.
- IT support and cybersecurity providers.
- Website hosting and maintenance providers.
- Cloud storage and backup providers.
- Payment processing services.
- Accreditation and auditing organisations, where appropriate.

These providers are expected to maintain appropriate confidentiality, privacy and information security safeguards.

3. Disclosure Required or Permitted by Law

We may disclose information without your consent where authorised or required by applicable legislation.

This may include:

- Mandatory reporting of certain notifiable diseases.
- Court orders, subpoenas or other lawful requirements.
- Reporting obligations to government authorities.
- Circumstances involving a serious threat to an individual's life, health or safety.
- Other disclosures permitted under applicable privacy legislation.

Where permitted, we will limit the information disclosed to what is necessary for the relevant purpose.

4. Disclosure to Family Members and Representatives

We will not routinely disclose your health information to family members, employers or other individuals without your consent.

Where appropriate, information may be shared with a person you have authorised to receive it.

In certain circumstances, information may be disclosed to a responsible person where permitted by law, including when you are unable to provide consent or communicate your wishes and disclosure is reasonably necessary for your healthcare.

Appointment Reminders, Recalls and Patient Communications

We may contact you using:

- Telephone calls.

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- SMS messages.
- Email.
- Secure messaging systems.
- Other approved communication channels.

These communications may relate to:

- Appointment confirmations and reminders.
- Appointment cancellations or changes.
- Test results and follow-up arrangements.
- Preventive health reminders.
- Immunisation reminders.
- Clinically necessary recalls.
- General practice announcements and administrative matters.

We take reasonable precautions to protect your privacy when communicating electronically.

You may request alternative communication arrangements or advise us of your preferred contact method.

Where communications relate to clinically necessary recalls or follow-up care, opting out of a particular communication method does not necessarily remove the underlying clinical need for follow-up.

We will not use your personal information for direct marketing of goods or services without your consent where required by law. You may withdraw marketing consent at any time.

Telehealth Consultations

Hampstead Medical may provide telephone or video consultations where clinically appropriate. During telehealth consultations, personal and health information may be collected, discussed and documented in your medical record.

We take reasonable steps to protect the privacy and security of information exchanged during telehealth consultations.

Patients are encouraged to:

- Participate from a private and secure location.
- Use a secure internet connection where possible.
- Ensure that other individuals cannot overhear confidential discussions unless they have been invited to participate.

Telehealth consultations are documented in the same manner as face-to-face consultations.

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We may use approved telehealth platforms or service providers to facilitate these consultations. Their handling of information is subject to applicable privacy and security requirements.

Online Appointment Bookings and Third-Party Platforms

Our practice may offer online appointment bookings through third-party platforms, including HotDoc, where applicable.

When using an online booking service, you may be required to provide personal information such as your name, contact details and appointment-related information.

Information submitted through these platforms may be collected and processed by the relevant service provider for appointment management and communication purposes.

Third-party platforms operate under their own privacy policies and terms of use. We encourage patients to review these policies before submitting information.

We take reasonable steps to ensure that the third-party services we engage maintain appropriate privacy and security safeguards.

Website Enquiries, Contact Forms and Online Requests

Our website may provide contact forms, online enquiry forms, feedback forms or other electronic services.

When you submit information through these services, we may collect the information necessary to respond to your enquiry or process your request.

Patients should avoid including detailed or sensitive medical information through general website contact forms unless specifically requested.

Submitting an online enquiry does not establish a doctor-patient relationship and does not guarantee that clinical advice will be provided electronically.

Online Prescription and Referral Requests

We do not offer these services.

Electronic Communications and Secure Messaging

Our practice may communicate with patients and other healthcare providers through email, SMS, electronic messaging and other approved digital communication systems.

We take reasonable steps to protect information transmitted electronically. However, patients should be aware that ordinary email and SMS are not completely secure methods of communication.

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Where documents containing personal or health information are sent electronically to patients, our practice takes reasonable steps to protect the information during transmission. Where appropriate, documents are encrypted or password-protected before being sent to help prevent unauthorised access. Patients may be required to use a password or other verification method to access these documents. Any passwords or access instructions will be communicated separately where appropriate.

Where clinically relevant, electronic communications may be retained as part of your medical record.

Our practice may also use secure messaging systems and electronic prescribing services to exchange relevant healthcare information with other authorised healthcare providers.

Patients should not use general email, SMS or website forms to seek urgent medical assistance.
In an emergency, call Triple Zero (000) or attend the nearest emergency department.

My Health Record and Digital Health Services
Where applicable and authorised, our practice may participate in and access the Australian Government's My Health Record system.

This may involve accessing or uploading relevant health information, including:

- Shared Health Summaries.
- Event Summaries.
- Discharge Summaries.
- Medication information.
- Pathology and diagnostic imaging reports.
- Other relevant clinical documents.

Information accessed or uploaded through My Health Record is managed in accordance with the My Health Records Act 2012, applicable privacy requirements and relevant access controls.

For more information, visit the Australian Government's My Health Record website:
https://www.digitalhealth.gov.au/initiatives-and-programs/my-health-record

Artificial Intelligence and Digital Documentation Technologies
Our practice may use approved digital technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted tools, speech-to-text applications, clinical documentation software and administrative automation tools to support healthcare delivery and practice operations.

Where such technologies are used, they are intended to assist healthcare professionals and do not replace the professional judgement or clinical decision-making of the treating practitioner.

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Depending on the technology and its purpose, information processed may include consultation discussions, relevant clinical information or other personal information.

Where AI tools are used to record, transcribe or process a consultation, patients will be informed about the use of the technology and the relevant information-handling arrangements. Informed consent will be obtained where required, and patients will be given an opportunity to ask questions or decline its use.

We take reasonable steps to ensure that:

- Appropriate privacy and security safeguards are in place.
- Patient information is only accessed by authorised persons.
- Service providers are assessed for privacy and security risks.
- Information is not used for unrelated purposes without appropriate authority.
- AI-generated clinical documentation is reviewed by the treating healthcare professional before being relied upon or incorporated into the medical record.
- Relevant consent and decisions are documented where appropriate.

All clinical decisions remain the responsibility of the treating healthcare professional.

Website Cookies and Analytics

Our website may use cookies and analytics technologies to improve website functionality, understand visitor behaviour and monitor website performance.

Cookies are small data files stored on your device when you visit a website.

The information collected may include:

- Pages visited.
- Time spent on the website.
- Browser and device information.
- General website navigation patterns.
- IP address and approximate location information.

We may use third-party analytics services for website performance and reporting.

You may adjust your browser settings to disable cookies. However, doing so may affect certain website functions.

Where applicable, third-party analytics providers may collect information in accordance with their own privacy policies.

Overseas Disclosure and Storage of Information

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Hampstead Medical takes reasonable steps to ensure that personal and health information is stored and managed securely.

Our practice uses Australian-based software providers, cloud storage, website hosting and other technology service providers. These services are hosted and stored within Australia.

We take reasonable steps to ensure that third-party service providers maintain appropriate privacy, confidentiality and information security safeguards in accordance with applicable Australian privacy legislation.

We will not make unsupported assurances that all information is stored exclusively within Australia.

How We Store and Protect Your Information

We take reasonable steps to protect personal and health information from misuse, interference, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

Information may be stored in:

- Electronic medical record systems.
- Practice management software.
- Secure cloud-based systems.
- Secure electronic communication platforms.
- Paper-based medical and administrative records.
- Diagnostic images and other clinical documents.

Security measures may include:

- Individual staff access accounts and permissions.
- Password protection and multi-factor authentication where available.
- Secure network and system configurations.
- Encryption where appropriate.
- Regular data backups.
- Physical security of practice premises and records.
- Confidentiality obligations for practice team members and contractors.
- Staff privacy and information security training.
- Secure disposal of documents and electronic information.
- Monitoring and management of suspected security incidents.

Access to patient information is restricted to authorised individuals who require the information to perform their duties or provide healthcare.

Access to Your Personal and Health Information

You have the right to request access to your personal and health information held by our practice, subject to applicable legislation.

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Requests should be made in writing to the Practice Manager or Privacy Officer.

We may ask you to verify your identity before releasing information to protect against unauthorised disclosure.

Where appropriate, access may be provided through:

- A copy of your medical records.
- A summary of relevant medical information.
- Access to specific clinical documents.
- Secure electronic transfer to you or another healthcare provider authorised by you.

We aim to respond to access requests within a reasonable timeframe.

A reasonable fee may apply for administrative work associated with providing copies of records, where permitted by law. Any applicable fee will be communicated before processing the request.

In limited circumstances permitted by legislation, access may be refused or provided in an alternative manner. If access is refused, we will explain the reasons where required and advise you of available complaint and review options.

Correction of Your Personal and Health Information

We take reasonable steps to ensure that the personal and health information we hold is accurate, complete, up to date and relevant.

If you believe information held by our practice is incorrect or incomplete, you may request a correction.

Requests should be made in writing to the Practice Manager or Privacy Officer.

Where appropriate, we will investigate the request and correct the information.

Clinical records are maintained as an accurate account of healthcare provided. Where an existing clinical entry requires correction, an appropriate amendment or supplementary entry may be made rather than deleting the original clinical record.

Retention and Disposal of Health Records

Hampstead Medical retains patient health records in accordance with applicable legislation, professional obligations and record-keeping requirements.

In Victoria, private health service providers are required to retain health records for the applicable minimum periods under the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic).

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Generally, this includes:

- Adult health records: at least seven years after the last occasion on which a health service was provided to the individual.
- Health records relating to children: until the individual reaches 25 years of age.

Longer retention periods may apply in particular circumstances.

When records are no longer required to be retained, they will be securely destroyed or permanently de-identified in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Data Breaches and Privacy Incidents

Our practice takes reasonable steps to prevent and respond to suspected or actual privacy breaches.

A data breach may occur when personal information is lost, accessed without authorisation, disclosed incorrectly, modified without permission or otherwise compromised.

Examples include:

- Medical information being sent to the wrong recipient.
- Unauthorised access to electronic medical records.
- Loss or theft of a device containing patient information.
- Cybersecurity incidents affecting practice systems.
- Unauthorised disclosure of patient information.

Where a suspected privacy breach occurs, we will assess and manage the incident in accordance with our internal procedures and applicable legislation.

Where an eligible data breach is likely to result in serious harm, we will comply with the Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme, including notifying affected individuals and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) where required.

Any breach involving My Health Record information will also be managed in accordance with the applicable My Health Record reporting requirements.

Anonymous Enquiries

Where lawful and reasonably practicable, you may make general enquiries about our services without identifying yourself.

However, anonymous interactions may not always be possible when:

- Booking an appointment.
- Receiving medical treatment.
- Accessing your medical records.

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- Requesting a prescription or referral.
- Making a Medicare claim.
- Receiving services that require identity verification.

We will explain when identifying information is necessary to provide the requested service.

Making a Privacy Complaint

If you believe your personal or health information has been handled inappropriately, you may make a privacy complaint to our practice.

Complaints should be directed to:

Privacy Officer
Hampstead Medical
Suite 5, 44 Hampstead Road, Maidstone VIC 3012
Email: reception@hampsteadmedical.com.au
Telephone: 03 9318 4322

When making a complaint, please provide sufficient information to allow us to investigate the matter.
Our practice will:

- Acknowledge receipt of your complaint.
- Review and investigate the concerns raised.
- Take reasonable steps to resolve the matter.
- Provide a response within a reasonable timeframe.
- Advise you of any further options available if the matter cannot be resolved.

External Privacy Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you may contact the relevant privacy regulator.
For complaints relating to the Australian Privacy Act and Australian Privacy Principles:

Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)
Website: https://www.oaic.gov.au
Telephone: 1300 363 992
For complaints relating to health information under Victorian privacy legislation:

Health Complaints Commissioner (Victoria)
Website: https://hcc.vic.gov.au
Telephone: 1300 582 113

Changes to This Privacy Policy

Hampstead Medical may review and update this Privacy Policy from time to time to reflect changes in legislation, professional standards, technology and practice operations.

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The latest version will be made available on our website and upon request at reception.

We encourage patients to review this policy periodically to remain informed about how their personal and health information is managed.

Contact Us

If you have any questions about this Privacy Policy, how we collect or manage your information, or wish to exercise your privacy rights, please contact:

Privacy Officer
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We are committed to protecting your privacy and maintaining your trust in the healthcare services we provide.